



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE CLERK**

Reply to Northern Division Address

Felicia C. Cannon, Clerk of Court  
Jarrett B. Perlow, Chief Deputy  
Elizabeth B. Snowden, Chief Deputy

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY ATTORNEYS  
CONSIDERING APPLICATION TO THE CJA PANEL**

**1. How do I apply for membership on the CJA panel?**

Contact Maureen Essex, the CJA Coordinating Attorney, at 410-962-7494 for an application or download the application from the forms on the Court's website. **The misdemeanor panel is currently closed.** Felony panel applications are considered each spring by the CJA Committee. Applicants must have felony trial experience and be a member of the federal bar to be considered for admission to the felony panel.

**2. How many CJA assignments can I expect to receive from the court?**

It varies. The misdemeanor panel contains a large number of attorneys. While every effort is made to fairly rotate the number of appointments, the size of the misdemeanor panel means that no attorney can expect a significant number of misdemeanor case appointments. All of the misdemeanor cases are handled by CJA misdemeanor duty attorneys, as explained below.

The felony panel contains approximately 130 members. The Court keeps the size of the panel small so that each felony panel attorney receives a sufficient number of appointments to remain current in the application of the federal sentencing guidelines. This means that every felony panel attorney can expect to receive at least one CJA felony appointment per year. Depending on your availability and willingness to accept cases that are expected to last more than two weeks in trial, you could receive more appointments.

**3. What is a misdemeanor duty day panel attorney?**

The Court hears misdemeanor cases in several locations. The locations include Aberdeen Proving Ground, Andrews Air Force Base, and Baltimore. In November, an annual solicitation is sent to all misdemeanor panel attorneys inviting them to apply for a duty day. On that duty day, the misdemeanor panel attorney will be assigned 25% of the initial appearances scheduled for that day. The other 75% of the cases will be assigned to an attorney

from the Federal Public Defender's office. The duty attorney ordinarily receives at least one case assignment. The duty attorney may volunteer for any court location but may only claim the actual driving time from his or her office or one hour, whichever is less. *If a case assignment is not made to the duty attorney, he or she cannot claim compensation for the time spent as duty attorney or receive reimbursement for expenses incurred.* Compensation for the duty day should be split up among the cases assigned and billed on the case vouchers. While every effort is made to insure that sufficient initial appearances are on the docket for assignment to the duty attorney there is always the possibility that the clients may fail to appear for their initial appearances, and thus there may not be a case assignment.

**4. What are the requirements to remain on the felony panel?**

One case assignment per year is required and the panel attorney must attend one felony panel training session each year. The felony panel training sessions are held in Baltimore in May and in Greenbelt in November.

**5. What are the case compensation maximums?**

Felony	\$ 9,900.00
Misdemeanor	\$ 2,800.00
Non-capital habeas	\$ 9,900.00
Witness/Target	\$ 2,100.00
Appeal	\$ 7,100.00

**6. What if my claimed compensation is more than the case compensation maximum?**

The Criminal Justice Act provides that an attorney can seek compensation in excess of the statutory maximum if a memorandum in support of excess compensation, or CJA Form 26 (statement in support of excess compensation), is filed with the voucher. The voucher must then be certified by the District Judge to the Chief Judge of the Fourth Circuit as a case requiring excess compensation to provide fair compensation to appointed counsel. If the Chief Judge of the Fourth Circuit approves the District Judge's recommendation regarding compensation, the voucher claim is paid in full. The Court strictly scrutinizes any claim for compensation in excess of the statutory maximum, particularly if the case was resolved through a guilty plea.

**7. What is the hourly rate of compensation for CJA panel attorneys?**

Effective January 1, 2015, the hourly rate of compensation is \$ 127.00 per hour.